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FROM: PARIS

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2287, OCTOBER 27, 6 PM

ACTION DEPARTMENT 2287, INFORMATION LONDON, BONN, BERLIN, MOSCOW UNNUMBERED.

I ACCOMPANIED DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE GILPATRIC ON HIS CALL LAST EVENING ON MINISTER OF DEFENSE MESSMER.

LATTER EXTREMELY AFFABLE, INDICATING THAT HE ANTICIPATED WITH MUCH PLEASURE HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO US. CONVERSATION, WHICH LASTED ABOUT AN HOUR, COVERED BROAD RANGE OF SUBJECTS, INCLUDING MESSMER'S HIGH OPINION OF GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTER STRAUSS, NECESSITY FOR EVER CLOSER FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION, MESSMER'S DESIRE FOR JOINT EUROPEAN PRODUCTION ESPECIALLY OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT TO TIE GERMANS IN EVEN MORE FIRMLY, TRAINING GERMAN FORCES IN FRANCE, BUILD UP ALLIED FORCES IN EUROPE, ETC. IN CONNECTION WITH LATTER POINT MESSMER SAID HE FORESAW NO DIFFICULTY IN RAISING PRESENT CEILING FOR US FORCES IN FRANCE.

WITH RESPECT TO BERLIN CRISIS MESSMER SAID THAT FRENCH COULD NOT AGREE TO ANY "ARRANGEMENT" OVER BERLIN WHICH WOULD WEAKEN GERMAN POSITION. DESTINIES OF THESE TWO COUNTRIES TOO CLOSELY INTERTWINED; FRANCE'S DEFENSE DEPENDS ON GERMANY AS GERMANY'S DEPENDS ON FRANCE.

MESSMER FEARED THAT WERE ANY "ARRANGEMENT" REACHED OVER BERLIN THIS WOULD THREATEN ALLIANCE. HE REFERRED NOT ONLY TO NORTHERN MEMBERS AND TURKEY, BUT EVEN ITALY.

SECRETARY GILPATRIC EXPLAINED THAT GOVERNMENT OF US SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC OPINION WAS DETERMINED STAND FIRM WITH RESPECT TO BERLIN, REALIZING THAT ANY WEAKENING OVER BERLIN WOULD ONLY

RESULT

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E. O. 11652, SEC. 2(E), 5(D), 5(E) AND 11

Department of State (WAK-77-633)
Y WAK N. S. DATE 9/1/77

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-2- 2287, OCTOBER 27, 6 PM FROM PARIS

RESULT IN FURTHER DEMANDS LATER DATE, HENCE WISER TO MAKE STAND
THIS JUNCTURE.

MR. MESSMER SAID THAT HE HAD EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH BRITISH
DEFENSE MINISTER WATKINSON AND MR. HEATH, AND IN RECENT
CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM HE GAINED IMPRESSION THAT BRITISH
MUCH MORE CONCERNED WITH THEIR ENTRY COMMON MARKET THAN OVER
BERLIN PROBLEM. MESSMER CAN UNDERSTAND THIS, FOR THIS IS
MOST RADICAL CHANGE HISTORICALLY, NECESSITATING COMPLETE
REORIENTATION OF BRITISH POINT OF VIEW INVOLVING NECESSITY
OF BRITISH WORKING TOWARD SOLIDITY OF CONTINENT AS OPPOSED
TO HISTORIC ROLE OF PLAYING ONE CONTINENTAL NATION AGAINST
ANOTHER, ETC.

LYON

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